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ABSTRACT

The document reports on a conference which reviewed progress of the Artists-in-Schools (AIS) program. Sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts, the program places professional artists in elementary and secondary schools for residencies of several days to a full year. Artists, educators, and AIS state coordinators who participated in the conference expressed their concerns about what was and should be happening as professional artists are utilized to help develop children's creative skills. The following topics were discussed: (1) defining the roles of coordinators, artists, and educators; (2) selecting artists and schools for participation; (3) experiences of success and disappointment; (4) the tension inherent in striving for uniqueness against the need to recognize commonalities; (5) whether priorities should be directed toward benefiting the artists or the students, with consensus that a clarification of goals was desirable; (6) reports from state coordinators about problems of excessive paperwork, travel, and demands on time; (7) cooperation between the AIS program and state education departments; (8) the number of variables which make evaluation difficult to describe in precise terms; (9) the need for greater public relations efforts from the National Endowment for the Arts; and (10) the need to train teachers to carry on the program's work. Looking ahead, the conferees felt that success will be contingent upon funding and public support. A reprint from the Congressional Record gives an idea of the history, growth, and potential of the AIS program. (DI)

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EXTENDING THE DREAM

A Report of the 1975 Artists-in-Schools National Conference

SP 011067

National Endowment for the Arts
U. S. Office of Education
Washington, D. C.

Center for Continuing Education
University of Notre Dame
July 16 - 18, 1975

THE ARTISTS-IN-SCHOOLS PROGRAM

Artists-in-Schools encourages cooperative efforts of professional artists, students, and teachers, to enrich the creativity of all three. The purpose is not to train more professional artists, but to enhance children's powers of perception, expression, and communication.

Started as a pilot activity in six states in 1969-70, the program will, in 1975-76 reach well over a million students and teachers in 7,500 schools throughout the fifty states, with approximately 2,000 artists and craftsmen at work -- among them dancers, musicians, poets, painters, sculptors, graphic artists, photographers, potters, actors, filmmakers, and architects.

The program, funded primarily through grants to state arts agencies, places professional artists in elementary and secondary schools for residencies that range from a few days to a full academic year. The National Endowment for the Arts is the sponsoring agency, working in close cooperation with the U. S. Office of Education.

This report of the 1975 Artists-in-Schools National Conference, held at the Center for Continuing Education, University of Notre Dame, July 16 - 18, was written by Ronald Gross, Poet-in-Residence at the North Shore Community Arts Center, Long Island, New York.

Harold Arberg
Director, Arts and Humanities Staff
U. S. Office of Education

John Hoare Kerr
Director of Education
National Endowment for the Arts

FOREWORD

Although art is about the spirit and the soul, it is not simply a spontaneous occurrence. Over and over again, artists have proven that art, through the creative process, is not something that happens offhandedly. It is a quite deliberate process, and in many respects requires a preparation and self discipline every bit as rigorous as that in other professions.

Nor is this a matter of merely incidental concern, especially for those involved in the Artists-in-Schools Program. Cognizance of the skill and technical mastery which art demands is not only a condition for achieving an adequate theoretical understanding of its nature, but a major element in any rationale for upgrading its place in American education.

Art is an integral part of human life, in some sense a record of the human soul shaped from our background as a fabric of our lives. And yet the expression of any and every soul is not art. Spontaneity and the universal human impulse to create play their parts, but in the final analysis those products, those expressions, which really deserve to be called art are as much the result of careful training and disciplined work as they are of any deeper longings we fall heir to.

True art comes from a committment to striving for excellence, and the true artist is the embodiment of that committment. What better way to develop the attitudes and habits which lead to this committment than through our schools? What better way to prepare the ground for really meaningful art than by making serious and talented artists a vital part of the educational process?

This is the task that the Artists-in-Schools Program has taken as its own. In a recent meeting chaired by Nancy Hanks, the National Council on the Arts adopted a statement on Artists-in-Schools which reaffirmed certain fundamental principles for the development of the program:

> "The Council reaffirms its belief that the success of Artists-in-Schools is based in large measure on the participation of exceptionally talented professional artists in situations where the creative process is encouraged. In-depth contact with students, adequate studio space, equipment and supplies are essential to the success of each project. In addition, the remuneration paid to the artists and the schedule should provide the artists with the opportunity to work independently, thereby contributing substantially to the financial and creative life of participating artists.
>
> "The Council agrees with the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies' statement of April 1974 'that one of the prime functions of the advisory panel (for Artists-in-Schools) is to assist the National Endowment for the Arts in this national state-based program in maintaining the highest pro-

fessional standards of excellence artistically and educationally.' In the opinion of the Council, the Artists-in-Schools Advisory Panel has been helpful in this regard, and the Council expects that the Panel will continue to assist in maintaining the improving standards of excellence.

"While responsibility for assuring the high quality of the programs is shared by state, local and national agencies the greatest reliance must be placed upon state arts agencies with knowledge of local artists and the communities in which the program is to be carried out."

The following pages summarize the concerns expressed at the 1975 annual meeting on Artists-in-Schools. They are followed by a reprint from the Congressional Record which gives an idea of the history, growth, and potential of this program in the educational field. Today, in this country, the game of soccer is widely practiced and appreciated by our school children everywhere and has an ever growing adult following. It was not always so, except in selected areas. Tomorrow, through programs such as Artists-in-Schools, perhaps we can say the same of the arts.

If we are to achieve this wide availability of the creative arts through education it will be in large measure due to the cooperative efforts of not only our artists, children, parents, teachers, and administrators, but also to the pioneering efforts of arts educators, private funds such as the JDR 3rd (whose staff member, Gene Werner,

was so helpful in advising on this and other workshops of the program), and the U. S. Office of Education (whose funding has helped us bring the artist and the educators together in a unified effort). While we know it is one of the best, we recognize that Artists-in-Schools is not the only program dedicated to bringing the arts ultimately to all of our children. Many of our conference participants attest to this. We applaud all these efforts and hope for continued cooperation among us all for the common goal.

Dr. Thomas P. Bergin
Dean of Continuing Education
University of Notre Dame
Conference Chairman

"...and I awoke and it was

true

I saw everything I saw

sky of roses house of daisies

a tree of orange a book of

apple and

I loved it all and I lived with

it for the rest of my life."

Quoted in AIS slide presentation previewed at conference, from one of poet Douglas Anderson's classes.

"In dreams begins responsibility."

W. B. Yeats

"Let's just take time to sense what we are doing," Dee Winterton, dance movement specialist, suggested to his audience. "Just get up and stretch, but be as aware as you can of each part of your body, what it's doing and how it feels. Dance is simply sensed motion."

To sense means to perceive, to become aware of, to grasp the meaning of, to understand. The 1975 Artists-in-Schools national conference was simply an occasion for the adults who constitute the program -- primarily artists, educators, and AIS state coordinators -- to sense what they were doing.

The 250-odd participants in the meeting included:

- an artist from each state
- an AIS coordinator from each state
- teachers and principals of schools involved
- leaders of national professional arts education associations
- State school officials including chief officers, arts directors who also serve as chairpersons of State Alliance for Arts Education committees, coordinators of Special Arts Projects under the Emergency School Aid Act.

The conference was chaired by Dr. Thomas P. Bergin, chairman of the AIS National Panel and of the Indiana Arts

Commission, and dean of Notre Dame's Center for Continuing Education, which hosted the meeting. The other major federal officials who attended were John Hoare Kerr, director of education for the National Endowment for the Arts, and Harold Arberg, director of the Arts and Humanities Staff, U. S. Office of Education.

The purpose of the conference was to examine what was actually happening and what should be happening. Among the topics addressed were:

- defining the roles of the coordinators, the artists, and the educators
- improving relationships among the various agencies and governmental levels
- selecting artists and schools for participation
- preparing artists for their role in the schools, and preparing the schools to receive the artists
- following up and encouraging continuation of projects
- evaluation
- developing interdisciplinary programs
- funding

The conference was what it was designed to be: an occasion for the participants to compare notes with one another, reinforce one

another's strong points, try to solve some common problems, celebrate the joys of working in the schools and find company for the misery and frustration thereof. Harold Arberg caught the spirit of the conference when he compared its atmosphere to Kurt Vonnegut's fantasy-planet where only two kinds of creatures live. One kind spends its life saying, "Here I am...here I am..." and the other spends its life responding, "So glad you are...so glad you are...so glad you are."

Unlike many conferences, this one's overriding value was in the immediate occasion and for the direct participants. It was not just a stage set up for publishable papers, resounding resolutions and the pronouncement of new policies. "We didn't design this conference to generate 'The Gospel according to Notre Dame,'" said one of the conference planners.

Celebration

Living art informed the conference. The first evening centered on a recital with Iolani Luahine, the legendary interpretor of the dances of Hawaii; Judith Jamison of the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater; and the Pilobolus Dance Theatre. But just as striking as the professional quality of this recital was the impromptu material-

ization, at the reception afterwards, of a Bluegrass trio. In an instant Ken Waters of Eagle, Montana, and Carolyn Folkins, a "poet, potter, and pig farmer" from Norman, Oklahoma, were doing a "Buck Dance."

The next evening, Leonard Randolph, director of the National Endowment for the Arts' Poets in Schools Program, organized a reading that held an audience rapt for two hours as poets from across the country expressed the rhythms and images of their landscapes, external and internal.

At all hours, painters and sculptors were found sprawled on the floor, going through each other's photographs, or gathered in the auditorium running their slides.

The mix of dress and deportment was itself a delight. There were febrile dancers in bleached denim, bearded poets in silky shirts emblazoned with sunsets, a jazz musician and a sculptor in elegant suits complete with vests, arts administrators in peasant blouses and sneakers, school administrators in two-tone shoes, an Endowment official who hasn't worn a tie for ten years.

Much of the conference was, purely and simply, celebration rather than cerebration -- celebration of the diverse delights of bringing the arts to the young.

Outstanding practitioners from each of the "component"* fields recounted and often demonstrated the values and achievements of AIS programs.

- John Raimondi, sculptor-in-residence at the Portland (Me.) Vocational School, told how he and his students created a giant welded metal sculpture and then took it on a 40-foot truck to their patron, a doctor in Geneva, N. Y.

- Daniel Lusk, poet in the South Dakota schools, read from his remarkable collection of students' work, Home-Made Poems, including the one-liner written by one combative boy about his nemesis: "If I were the world, I would shake James off."

- Larry Golsh showed silver jewelry and clay pottery produced at St. John's Indian School on the Gila Reservation in Laveen, Arizona.

- Jazz pianist Tee Carson of D. C. showed how he involves large groups of students by turning his conference audience into a simulated orchestra.

- Doreen Nelson and Nancy Green showed slides of their closely related but independent work on opposite coasts, in which they engage children in the imaginative re-designing of their urban environment.

- Dee Winterton and Connie Jo Hepworth, dance movement specialists, demonstrated their way of awakening people to the richness of experiencing their own bodies, through simple exercises and experiments.

*Though AIS is comparatively new in its concepts and activities, it has already generated its own lingo. Thus everybody at the conference understood instantly the special meanings of such terms as "component." It refers to one of the divisions-by-art-form of the total AIS Program, as, "the Dance Component."

Experiences

The experience of working in schools was explored with delight by the participants, particularly the artists. "We feel that we belong there, and we are nourished by the experience," one dancer said. A sculptor told how his "non-academic" students, whom the school had considered resistant to anything "cultural," worked ten hours a day with him. There were poignant stories of disaffected students who were turned on, oppressed youngsters who found expression for their justifiable rage. "I always slept in a dirty bed," was the only poem written by one boy in South Dakota. And a boy in Wyoming told a visiting writer: "I like to write poetry with you because you let me use my wrong hand."

But the artists also talked about meeting with failure and disappointment. They spoke of encountering unprepared and distracted students, of being exploited as ersatz substitute teachers for "relief", of being received with hostility because of a beard, a style of dressing, a way of talking. One artist proposed that wherever possible each school and artist should review their situation a few months after the term starts, in order to rectify unsatisfactory conditions or, in extreme cases, to shift an artist to a different school.

Artists complained of the rigors of traveling, the low pay and occasional slow pay, lack of funds for materials, inequities between rates in the different components of the program, difficulties in maintaining the momentum of their own work while meeting the mushrooming demands, in many residencies, of students and teachers. "The greatest danger to this whole program," one artist said "is that the magic will disappear as artists get burned out by working so hard for so little money."

Uniqueness

An emphasis on uniqueness and diversity ran through all the discussions. The most common reaction to any attempt at generalization or prescription was: "it depends" -- on the particular school, the particular community, the particular artist, the particular students. "At this point we're just all very, very different," said Earnest Morgan voicing the pervasive sentiment.

The AIS state coordinators, for example, realizing they had much to talk about, organized several special meetings. But they quickly discovered that the experienced coordinator had little to discuss profitably with the new coordinator. Similarly the artists discovered great dissimilarities in the conditions and problems of their work: poets travel a lot; filmmakers benefit

from the absence of vested interests (such as English or art teachers) in the school; dancers stand out, so to speak, because they have organized themselves and effectively shaped their component to meet their needs. Geographical and social differences also loomed large: the problems and possibilities in Utah or Mississippi are strikingly different from those in Massachusetts or California.

Finally, but perhaps most important, a consensus seemed to emerge that, since so much hinges on the individual artist and the situation in the particular classroom or school, general principles are elusive. "It's the opposite of going to McDonald's," said Susan Meiselas, a filmmaker who works in Southern schools. "Neither the school nor the artist really knows what any given experience will be like. So don't worry too much about predicting what will happen. Concentrate on defining what you both want to happen, then let happen what happens."

What W. H. Auden called "the lover's principle: one at a time" seemed the dominant motif. The field presents itself to most practitioners as a series of special situations rather than a well-mapped terrain. Whether this makes it a prospector's dream or a minefield depends, one imagines, on which side of the

bed you get out of each morning.

The participants seemed to be saying that the AIS "Program" is in fact hundreds of quite different local programs, and that in many respects, some of them basic, the differences are more important than the similarities. Thus progress is to be made, they implied, not by applying general principles to a given program, but by discerning and responding to that program's unique problem.

At the same time the participants had a sharp eye for similarities, analogues, comparisons, ideas and practices to borrow or steal. And they had a healthy impulse to find more of these: hence, the proposals for greater communication.

Overall, the conference seemed to show the AIS field poised between celebrating uniqueness and recognizing commonalities. Artists, for example, while avowing that each project should take shape around the individual artist, nonetheless wanted more opportunity to see other artists at work and to discuss techniques. Again, coordinators wanted autonomy in responding to the idiosyncratic needs of their state. But they also advocated regional meetings, workshops, and a newsletter to develop collective expertise.

It hardly needs to be noted that this tension -- between the

concrete and the general, the particular instance and the abstract principle, the existential reality and the theoretical idea -- is a basic condition of the work of art itself. So it is little wonder that this group of arts activists can live and work, poised there.

Priorities

One might think that the one thing everyone would agree about was the basic priority of the AIS Program. But this was not the case.

Two distinct viewpoints emerged and informed much of the discussion: first, that AIS should benefit artists; second, that AIS should benefit students in the schools. It would be easy to argue that both viewpoints are consistent with the official goals for the program, expressed as those are in highly general terms: "to provide a shared artistic experience through artists, students and teachers working together." Most participants probably would agree that the two goals can and should be fused. But fusing them is a process still in an early and volatile state. The tension should be an ultimately creative one, but it was a real tension at this conference, and should not be glossed over.

Leonard Randolph expressed the first point of view: "As AIS grows larger and stronger," he warned, "let us remember

the reason for the program: the individual artist. When we began the program a decade ago we weren't thinking of AIS coordinators, state education departments, and all that. And it is still true today that the important thing is the effect of the program on individual artists. What's distinctive about AIS is what the artist uniquely has to offer that no one else can contribute -- something that can change lives, change institutions, and the change in artists themselves."

Artists frequently affirmed this central value that they bring to the enterprise. They had much to say of indifference, hostility, or determined opposition to the AIS Program on the part of the arts education establishment.

- "The greatest problem facing the program nationwide, is presented by the art educator's organizations, such as the National Art Education Association."

- "Our biggest challenge is to survive the growing threat which educational institutions perceive us to be because of our success."

- "Survival in the face of growing envy and competition from professional arts organizations, state departments of education, and other groups anxious to take control of funds, is our topmost problem."

Some took a positive approach:

- "The primary problem is finding ways to improve the negative response with which we

are greeted by arts educators who view us as a threat."

- "The challenge to us is to establish and maintain relations of mutual respect with the professional arts educators. They are not the enemy, unless the Endowment makes them so by its indifference."

- "The artist should wait and watch, work with the teachers, learn a little by observing, not just stomp in and do his art thing. The artist should take time to feel his way into the situation."

- "It is essential that we tie in with other phases of the arts-in-education movement, pushing the concept of artists in residence, and developing strategy and tactics in conjunction with others that provide a broader sense of direction and philosophy."

Artists pointed out these needs:

- Better pay (fees for poets, for example, were set in 1969 and have not been revised);

- More recognition (the visual artists asked for regional and national shows of their work);

- Reward for outstanding service (a Public Service Fellowship program was proposed to underwrite a period of rest and recuperation for artists who have served for several years in the program at great personal sacrifice);

- Reasonable fringe benefits, particularly some provision for medical care.

While the artists at the conference were thus speaking out on their own behalf, other participants were stressing just as

strongly an alternative priority. They argued that the bottom line and the dominant value was the students. An eloquent expression of this point of view came from Ervin Kimball, principal of the Village School in Gorham, Maine, which has two residencies (one of movement specialists, one a dance company). "Remember that the program is basically with and for children," he said. "When you go into a school as an artist, give it your best and keep in mind why you are there: to benefit the children. It's essential that you communicate and cooperate with the teachers, and the administrators, even if it means temporarily setting aside some of your goals as artists."

And Peter Harotonik, national coordinator of the Film Component, remarked sharply that the young people who are, in this view, the raison d'etre of the program, were unrepresented at the conference. "I'd like to see the NEA renamed the National Endowment for Doing Good Things for Kids," he said.

The need to clarify goals, at every level, was a recurring theme. Participants expressed uncertainty about what the endowment's goals were for the entire program, as well as for the different components. Furthermore, it was argued, many state arts agencies have no clear and consistent aim for the

program. And the emphasis differs from state to state, with some states regarding AIS as essentially a program for the schools, and others making it a virtual artists' employment service. Down in the schools, goals are also unclear and diverse; teachers and artists often have quite different conceptions of what they are to do together.

Even the styles of communication of different participants bespoke the contrast in values. Consider this pair of images: Alan Jabbour, director of the Endowment's new Folk Arts Component, unpacking his fiddle when it came time to describe his program and saying: "I'll do anything to avoid talking." And, on the other hand, the educator who asked earnestly whether "the components are differentiated along multi-dimensions in terms of conceptualization, implementation, and evaluation."

Looking towards resolution, some ways to alleviate or avoid conflict between teachers and artists were summarized by one group of diversified artists as follows:

1. Good matching by the coordinator.
2. Preparatory visits and workshops for the teachers.
3. Good definition of the roles of both teachers and artists to clarify respective responsibilities.

4. Care not to apply purely pedagogical values to the artists' contribution

Coordinators

The role of the AIS state coordinator was a key issue at the conference. The basic demands of the job are staggering. Gigi Ledkovsky of Maine put 15,000 miles on her car the first year. Judy Brockett of Missouri, with no secretarial help whatever, does her paper work each night. Others cited equally arduous schedules.

Asked to identify the most crucial problems facing them, one representative group of coordinators came up with a wide range assortment. Only one replied "None," while many just gasped out elaborations of the succinct "dollars, time, energy" or the poignant "TOO MUCH PAPERWORK."

Ellen Lovell of Vermont, a former coordinator, described the position as "arbitrating among irreconcilable tensions that are built into the program, through the different expectations of the artists, schools, parents, state arts agencies, and the Endowment. The job," she continued, "includes talking with school administrators to find receptive schools, looking at studio space, sensing the social dynamics of that space, meeting with artists, arranging panels to meet with artists and evaluate their work, selecting the

artists and the schools, meeting with the artist, school, and community people to negotiate the specific program."

Once the program gets under way the coordinator then gets caught up in such intricacies as "released time, credit, writing the contract, making sure the artist gets paid, and that the students have materials to work with, doing all the paperwork of requisitioning, disbursing, evaluating." This process was repeated more than thirty times in 1974-75 in the small state of Vermont, Ms. Lovell noted. In addition, she had the task of maintaining liaison with the Legislature, the State Education Department, and the endowment. And to make the whole process work the coordinator must find the money, which in poor states comes in $25 and $50 donations. Where the NEA forms say "Sources of Matching Funds" the Vermont coordinator is often tempted to write "Bake Sales."

Furthermore, experienced coordinators sense that they may become the scapegoats for others' frustrations with the program. "I have a real sense of paranoia," said one coordinator. "The state bears the burden for funding our positions, since there's no federal support for it. And the pressure on us builds up: we either get blamed for concentrating on a few

schools, or of not focusing our programs enough. Everyone leans on us to solve their problems. Sometimes I feel that the blocks keep stacking up and they're all going to come down on my head one day soon."

In response to these conditions, the coordinators made several important points. Some said in effect: "Maybe we're assuming too readily that if we don't do all these things, hell will break loose. Could we lean more on local resources and people?"

One possible model is offered by New York, where Poets in the Schools is a separate operation. It was suggested that other arts might develop similar local non-profit cooperatives through which the artists themselves could carry much of the weight of their particular programs. One such effort is being made through the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, out of the Center for Understanding Media in New York City.

In cases where the demands of administration become intolerable, it was suggested that coordinators may need to limit themselves to the number of projects they know they can handle.

There are, the conference made clear, many opportunities for coordinators to work with and through sympathetic organizations. Among those mentioned were education departments of colleges and

universities, P-TAs, such arts institutions as orchestras and museums, state arts associations, and teachers unions (which could, for instance, include an AIS session at their annual conference).

The coordinators convened several "rump" sessions during the conference to discuss their concerns, anxieties, and needs. Much of their deliberations were devoted to establishing their own information exchange in the form of a newsletter, to enable them to stay in communication and to provide an outlet for their distinctive professional needs. Other than this, their sessions did not produce any collective statement, manifesto, or resolutions. Moreover, their gatherings were understandably limited to coordinators.

So it is not possible to report here anything more than the concerns which brought the coordinators together, as expressed by one of them who was central in convening the meetings. These concerns* were:

- Need for up-to-date information about new directions in arts-in-education funding.

*This is an omnibus inventory of concerns expressed, not in any sense a consensus. Some coordinators were not at all concerned about some of these items, for example.

- Concern that with increased hostility of other organizations to AIS programs, a major set-back could occur if one state drops the program and becomes a widely-published negative example.

- Need for help at the top levels of AIS in establishing affinity with leaders in other sectors of education.

- Need for exchange of information and attitudes in AIS, top to bottom and bottom to top.

- Need for flexibility in budgets and design of programs.

- Need for either (1) block grants, (2) greater program flexibility, or (3) discretionary grant funds for composite programs or programs in new art areas.

- Need for revision of priorities within the Endowment, to assure continued increases in funding for AIS.

- Need for development of evaluation techniques and models.

- Increased philosophic clarity at the top.

- Need for greater objectivity in the award of grants, to assure that the process is non-political.

- Need for artists to take more responsibility for building programs.

In addition to this catalog of concerns which motivated their meetings, the following highly personal interpretation of the

discussions was also provided:

> "We had all said in one way or another a number of times what never surfaced as a unified statement: If the program is a real priority within the Endowment, is a means of legislative support for the arts, is an egalitarian as well as an artistic miracle, is a factor in community unity and educational progress, and if the artists are to continue to find intelligent assistance and economic support in large numbers, then someone must pay attention to those most responsible for the mechanism that makes it all happen. Someone must want to know our needs and must trust our abilities to understand political and economic realities and our willingness to cooperatively assist in moving the real obstacles to continue growth and success -- some of these within the Endowment. We are smart and resourceful and generally very committed to the miracle we have helped to establish."

SEDs

The ways that the AIS program and its coordinators relate, or should relate, to state departments of education were much debated. The situations vary widely from one state to the next. Harold Negley, Indiana State Superintendent of Education, told the conferees: "You bring the know-how and I assure you we'll bring the good will." In Pennsylvania, a nice division of labor has been worked out between the Council on the Arts and the State Department of Education, in which the council picks the artists and the schools, and the department administers the projects.

In other states, however, there is no relation - good or bad. Sometimes the state education department has no arts officer. In most cases cooperation is slight; the need for improvement was noted by many discussion groups. "Often the question is whether or not we work for the same government," said Diane Suda sharply, referring to situations where the state education department reports to the Legislature and the arts council is part of the executive branch.

Some sample views:

- "My state's fine-arts specialist hates us."
- "We have no cooperation in finding schools, advertising and selling the program from the state department of education."
- "Our biggest problem is developing liaison with educators in the state, but keeping the program in arts council hands, even if it means slowing growth and expansion. It must not be curricularized to death in order to preserve continuity or expand."
- "Talk of merging with the state board of education leading to the possibility of such a merger is troubling me. Artists will eventually be unable to be active in the best sense of the program if such a merger comes about. Certification and other controls will become the rule."

The advantages of good cooperation -- "even if it means taking the superintendent out to lunch," as one participant put it -- are obvious. They include the development of funding possibilities,

help in planning and administration, and readier acceptance by the schools. A tremendous advantage can be to gear the AIS message into the well-oiled public information machinery that the state education departments maintain with the schools.

But dangers were noted, too. With funding comes, inevitably, a sharing of control, and often, also, the danger that the state department, having made a token investment in the arts, thereby considers itself absolved from further commitment.

On the whole, however, the conferees made clear that they were seeking to strengthen their programs through such relationships. An outburst of applause greeted the statement of Raymond Peterson, assistant commissioner of education from Minnesota, when he said that he deeply regretted that more of his counterparts from other states were not present. "I have the power to make the changes in my department which can help move this kind of work forward. But I needed to learn about it," he said.

Evaluation

The issue of evaluation, on which Professor Elliott Eisner of Stanford University, an influential arts educator, has recently attacked the AIS movement, was addressed by Joseph Wheeler.

He is project director of the first large scale study of AIS programs, contracted to the Western States Arts Foundation by the Endowment. The study will be carried out over the coming year in the Foundation's ten-state region of Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. It will confine itself to studying poetry and visual arts projects.

"Our study is designed to simply describe the AIS program more precisely, vividly, and usefully," said Wheeler. "It will do this by collecting reactions and observations from students, poets, artists, teachers, administrators and, to the extent possible, the community at large."

School districts participating in the study will represent a cross section of AIS projects, selected for characteristics such as size, length of residency, and previous experience with AIS projects. Results of the study will be published in late 1976.

"The results will document and describe rather than make recommendations or pass judgements," Wheeler noted. "Our study is descriptive rather than prescriptive."

So far researchers have reviewed a list of some 50 observed outcomes of poets' and artists' visits to classrooms, found considerable consistency among them, and refined them down to five or six.

Starting this fall these consolidated effects will be studied in a purely descriptive way, through a hundred two-hour interviews with students, teachers, artists, and others involved in projects.

"All of our results will have to be taken with a pound of salt," says study coordinator Morgan Johnson, echoing a conference leitmotif, "because situations are so different and we can't isolate the variables that enter into this particular part of the school program or the participants' lives. But the largeness of our sample and the diversity of our methodology should enable us to compile such a massive list of coincidences that it should suggest possible causal relationships -- even though we can't prove them statistically."

Despite the commendable modesty of these researchers, a number of artists expressed familiar reservations about the incompatability of research and the arts. "There's always a child at the periphery of the group, keeping out of the spotlight, saying nothing or very little," declared John Donahue, artistic director of the famed Children's Theatre in Minneapolis. "Yet the effects on that child, I've learned, may be as profound as on those who are on stage." And Gigi Ledkovsky added, "Some results of our work are always, and will always remain, secret. Never write an objective that says we want to know that secret."

PR

The conferees were asked to voice their concerns about AIS and its pub..c relations. In response, many called for what one described as "greater clout from the national level," meaning greater efforts by the Endowment in providing materials -- such as the slide show previewed at the conference -- that could introduce the AIS concept to new groups. Participants also suggested production of TV spot announcements and placement of articles in general magazines like Good Housekeeping.

Another effort urged on the Endowment was to exert influence on national education and arts organizations, perhaps by sending speakers to their conferences, or by luring them to regional conferences, or by offering articles to their journals. Art educators in particular need to be reached through such national efforts, many people felt.

Just as strong as this call for greater national effort was the conviction that a massive job is needed in the states and communities. Many conferees reported very uneven awareness of the program in their states with vast stretches uninformed. Media coverage, traveling, working through P-TAs, and exhibits were remedies suggested.

Typical comments reflecting the frustrations of getting the word out were: "Most people don't even know we exist." "Information never gets down to the individual classroom teachers." Help is clearly needed: a number of coordinators suggested that the whole PR problem be addressed regionally through how-to workshops and communication of successful strategies and materials.

Continuity and Funding

The problem of building continuity and permanence into AIS projects naturally came in for consideration. "How can we make certain that when we leave the dance goes on?" as one dancer put it. Several methods were suggested.

Empowering teachers to carry on the program was one, of the first importance. "When we started, we focused just on reading the kids," says designer Doreen Nelson of Saugus, California. "But now we've realized that training teachers is where it's at, because after we leave, the teacher stays." Nancy Green, who works in New York's South Bronx, agreed: "If we don't enable the teacher to take up the work, the program leaves with us." Interestingly, in Ms. Nelson's project funds were cut, and the school teachers say they'll go ahead without an artist-in-residence. "Whether or not they do that will be the acid test of my work," she said.

Other suggested paths to continuity included making the project highly visible in school and community, and working over a longer period in the school in order to create a firmer base. It was also suggested that to be eligible for the program some schools should be required to make a firm commitment over the long haul.

Some artists expressed a quite different (and to some rather shocking) view on continuity: alarm at the prospect of doing themselves out of a job. "Artists are hungry," said one who spoke for many. "And there are not many places in our society where they are respected. If continuity means continuance without the presence of the artist, it becomes the self-destruction of an important opportunity for employment." (Indeed, Thomas Bergin had pointed out that "the largest audience for the arts in America today is children.") Jane Remer of the JDR 3rd Fund, however, pointed out more or less reassuringly that such "self-destruction" is delusory: if the arts continue to advance in their value to the schools, she argued there will never be enough artists to go around and no attrition of opportunities in the long run. (Some artists recalled the old adage about "the long run.")

Most participants, however, hoped for continuity. And since Endowment funding will not increase, money will have to be found

elsewhere if projects and programs are to achieve permanence, let alone expand. "We must look to the communities for additional and continuing support of their local programs," Tom Bergin said.

In general this looks to be an elusive goal. As many participants noted, school districts seem unwilling to build AIS into their regular budgets, especially in these days of belt-tightening. One artist put the problem thus:

> "Just how does an artist or those involved in the arts build the understanding, faith, and rapport in the school administrators and teachers, to the point where they believe the arts are an integral part of the learning experience and believe this so strongly that sufficient funds are always available?"

One school principal said flatly that "the arts will not stand on their own in most school budgets -- they are not considered an educational necessity by many citizens across the country." Others disagreed, insisting that there must be pockets of waste in multi-million dollar school budgets and that finding support for AIS programs is "merely" a matter of shifting priorities. Probably both positions are true as they reflect different circumstances: the principal, for instance, came from a small community which measures its expenditures in thousands rather than millions of dollars. But the over-all impression one gets is that winning local support will be a struggle.

As to the Endowment's own funding policies, participants advocated two major changes. One was to move towards block funding, so that the states would have more flexibility in allocating funds among the components. The other was the provision of modest funds for the administration of the program.

"IFs"

Looking to the future, the participants tended to see promise and fulfillment for the AIS Program -- "if". The if's varied provocatively, and sometimes contradicted each other:

> "If a strong, national effort is mounted to establish the arts as an essential, valid area of learning..."
>
> "If financial support is available..."
>
> "If damned (sic) integrity is maintained..."
>
> "If the quality of the art remains the first priority..."
>
> "If the public is kept satisfied about the program's worth..."
>
> "If we avoid tying up with boards of education..."
>
> "If we are effectively organized on all levels and conscious of our direction..."
>
> "If artists are enabled to remain artists, and paid well enough..."
>
> "If the program keeps its goals clear..."

"If it continues in the present direction, keeping the focus not just on artists, but on the arts -- which belong to all the people."

A New Phase?

In the act of learning or of creation, as Whitehead so luminously pointed out, people tend to move from the stage of Romance to that of Precision. In the stage of Romance, a new possibility presents itself, a new horizon suddenly swims into view, there is a new dream. Artists-in-Schools was such a possibility in education, such a beckoning horizon, such a dream of a few pioneers, only ten years ago.

Now, with a million students and teachers and upwards of 2,000 artists involved, AIS may be entering the period of Precision, in which inchoate visions and ventures based on healthy impulses and young energy must be disciplined and more carefully articulated. The process need not destroy nor distort the original impulse -- though of course it may, as it often does. But the task demands doing: as Yeats wrote, "In dreams begins responsibility."

Thomas Bergin struck this note forcefully: "While moving in on and accepting these opportunities, we must carefully assess what happens to the students as they move with the arts. We must discern what is good, detect what is bad, and change our strategies in the

light of these findings."

The conviction seemed to take shape in the course of the conference that AIS should be developing the kind of structure implied by Whitehead's metaphor. "It needs tightening up," said John Culkin, a member of the National Panel. "Ours is the hard work of refining the dream and sharing it with others, as the greatest artists do through their discipline," said another member, Ellen Lovell of Vermont. The Western States evaluation project, the preoccupation with building continuity into projects, the aspiration towards longer residencies that can have a deeper effect on youngsters, teachers, and schools -- all suggested this trend.

Summary of Findings

of Several Work Groups

The major attempt to consolidate the conference's findings on major issues was a combined report of eight working groups that met for two sessions during the conference; each group consisted of participants who came from six or eight states in the same region or who shared the same general problems. Dee Winterton's report of these groups' conclusions made the following points:

Regarding continuation of the programs:

- A 3 - 5 year plan for follow-up, with some commitment for building the program into the regular school program after that period, should be a pre-condition of some site selections.

- State arts agencies must work more closely with state education departments and boards of education to ensure funding on a continuing basis.

- Greater involvement of local artists, and other local people, particularly parents, is also essential to build a base of long-term support.

- Public Relations must be improved at every level -- national, state, and local.

Regarding selection of the artist and preparation of artist and school:

- More widespread involvement of different people

in the process of selection and planning is essential. Included should be school administrators, school coordinators, etc.

- Clearer understanding should be developed about what each artist's role is in the school.

- There should be a coordinator at each site, responsible to the AIS coordinator and to the artist.

- School personnel should be prepared before the artist arrives, with workshops and planning sessions. The artist might come early to learn about the school and/or work with the faculty.

Regarding evaluation:

- Evaluation is and should be happening naturally, in the form of the articulation and sharing of experiences.

- Are evaluations sent to NEA of use? Who reads them? Are they available? The coordinators felt they got little feedback.

- Portfolios of materials should be maintained at the state level to be passed from state to state to share information.

Regarding interdisciplinary programs:

- You cannot force artists to work together.

- More flexibility in the NEA guidelines and/or block grants could allow for dual residencies by artists who did want to collaborate.

Regarding funding:

- Federal funding must continue as a stimulus

to local fundings -- withdrawal of federal funds is interpreted as retreat, and will cause states to pull out.

- Many creative coordinators are finding funds in ingenious ways that could help others if shared. Some type of medium for sharing ideas should be provided.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 93d CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

The Artists-in-Schools Program

REMARKS
OF

HON. JOHN BRADEMAS
OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 19, 1974

Mr. BRADEMAS. Mr. Speaker, on September 23 I had the privilege of presenting an address to a 3-day meeting of the National Advisory Panel on the National Endowment for the Arts' artists-in-schools program.

I should point out, Mr. Speaker, that the Panel was recently formed to help guide the growth of what is widely regarded as one of the Endowment's most successful programs, artists-in-schools.

Inaugurated in 1969, Mr. Speaker, the artists-in-schools program has this year placed 1,750 artists in over 5,000 schools.

Mr. Speaker, one of my distinguished constituents who serves as Chairman of the National Panel also addressed the meeting.

I refer to Dr. Thomas P. Bergin, dean of Notre Dame University's Center for Continuing Education, who also serves as chairman of the Indiana Arts Commission.

Because I am sure that my colleagues will be interested in Tom Bergin's perceptive comments on the role of the arts in improving the cultural literacy of our young citizens, I include a copy of his remarks at this point in the RECORD.

ARTISTS-IN-SCHOOLS PROGRAM

Distinguished guests, fellow panel members, and representatives of the National Endowment, it is a warm and cordial greeting which I extend to each of you this evening.

We are delighted to have you here . . . Father Hesburgh asked especially that I extend his best wishes and say you are indeed welcome to Notre Dame.

His new Presidential assignment on the Amnesty Commission may jeopardize his being able to be with us briefly tomorrow. He is at the present time returning from London and apparently they would like to set up a Commission meeting sometime Tuesday.

In light of the somewhat monumental task we have before us in reviewing the various proposals from all the States, I decided earlier that this evening should be an informal, unstructured, friendly gathering . . . one which would provide us an opportunity to get to know one another better and this indeed is what we want to do.

RECEPTION FOR ARTISTS-IN-SCHOOLS PANEL

The more I thought of what might be the most productive use of our time and lead to greater exchange of ideas, I decided perhaps it would be helpful to present a very quick overview of where we are and hopefully where we are going.

OVERVIEW

The artists-in-schools program began in 1969 and since its inception, the program has been enthusiastically greeted by children, artists, schools, teachers, parents and communities.

During the 1973-74 school year, the artists-in-schools program was operating in 5,000 schools in all 50 States and the 5 special jurisdictions. There were approximately 1,750 artists involved: dancers, musicians, poets, painters, sculptors, graphic artists, photographers, designers, craftsmen, actors, filmmakers, architects/environmental artists, and this year we are to add folk artists if we can find the money.

As the needs of the artists-in-schools program continue to grow, the question of support becomes increasingly crucial.

UNMET NEEDS

In the State of Indiana, for example, the request for $51,700 for school year 1975-76 represents a 118% increase over this year's funding and the impressive thing is that this increase is backed up with $100,800 in matching dollars, for a proposed total program (if our budget only permitted) of $152,000 to place craftsmen, visual artists, poets, filmmakers, and dancers in Indiana schools.

Lest one feel Indiana was immodest in its request, one should note that other States responded in the same way: New Hampshire requested a 347% increase, Pennsylvania a 308% increase, and Florida a 258% increase over last year!

Requests such as these arrived even though States were advised in the guidelines to request only modest increases from the 1974-75 school year program. The total request for the 1975-76 school year program is already approximately one million dollars over the amount budgeted for artists-in-schools.

Tremendous pressure is on the endowment and indeed upon this panel to secure the additional money to fund these programs and meet the individual needs of the States.

LOCAL SUPPORT

The money needed is not in the endowment and so we must look elsewhere.

Obviously one place we must look is to the communities for support. One of the most vital and successful programs operating almost entirely on community funding is an artists-in-schools project in the visual arts and crafts in San Francisco, initiated and developed by one of our artists-in-schools panelists, sculptor, Ruth A sawa Lanier.

This project, the Alvarado School Arts Workshop has received significant funding from several community foundations including the San Francisco Foundation, the Rosenberg Foundation, the Zellerbach family foundation and others from 1969-72. The program has also received school district funding and funding from the California Arts Commission. This indicates a high degree of community and state investment in the program, resulting in an exemplary model for visual artists and craftsmen.

Only this year, long after the project's proven success, has the endowment had funds to assist this project.

We understand through Ray Okimoto, a member of our artists-in-schools panel, that the department of education of the state of Hawaii is drawing up plans to ask state legislators for several million dollars to support artists-in-schools activities.

At a time when the United States Office of Education has disbanded its arts and humanities program, when the National Institute of Education's attention seems elsewhere, and when many schools are dropping art and music teachers from their staffs as they slash their budgets, the artists-in-schools program takes on an even greater significance.

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In our schools, this program still is opening avenues of perception and awareness for our children and demonstrating to education systems and to the public the great value and necessity of incorporating (not excluding) the arts into school curricula.

HISTORY OF THE PROGRAM

The artists-in-schools program is an outgrowth of the endowment's earlier poets in schools program, now an integral part of artists-in-schools. Historically, artists-in-schools has been a joint program with the United States Office of Education. The United States Office of Education suggested the endowment join it in expanding the program to, first the visual arts, and then to all the arts, and provided transfer funds to the endowment for expansion of artists-in-schools in the 1969–70 and 1970–71 school years. These first pilot projects accomplished with the United States Office of Education transfer money initiated the visual arts component in six states. (Incidentally, we currently have requests from 50 states for the 1975–76 visual arts and crafts component totaling $1,429,163—a far cry from the $100,000 in 1969.)

Both these pilot programs, in poetry and in visual arts, were so successful that in the school year 1970–71, 31 states participated in programs involving visual arts, theatre, dance, poetry, and music residencies. During the 1971–72 school year the film and architecture/environmental arts components were added and by the 1972–73 school year, all 50 States and the five jurisidictions were operating one or more artists-in-schools components.

OFFICE OF EDUCATION ROLE

Traditionally, the United States Office of Education transfer formula to the endowment has been the most successful funding avenue. Under this formula, planning at all levels has been joint between the United States Office of Education and the endowment. The formula has been an efficient administrative method for avoiding time lags, confusion on matching and guidelines, and duplication of staffing work-load and manpower.

Somehow this highly successful formula has fallen away, as has arts programming at the United States Office of Education. Faced with the realities of bureaucracy, money for artists-in-schools, when identified by the United States Office of Education has come from areas where arts are not funded for, and in, themselves but rather to assist to accomplish other goals.

For example—in the 1972–73 school year, the United States Office of Education provided approximately one million dollars from title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act—commissioner's discretionary funds for support of some highly successful artists-in-schools activities.

In the 1973–74 school year, the United States Office of Education had to draw from funds appropriated under the Manpower Development and Training Act to offer a series of grants for training programs and technical assistance for artists (poets, dancers, filmmakers). These funds were utilized primarily for workshops and seminars, and accomplished the goals of the act by training young artists for new areas of employment in our schools. Yet, as with title III funds, when the funds were not available from the United States Office of Education budget in the ensuing years, the strain was felt in the program and in the field.

Although, artists-in-schools has not received any direct support from the United States Office of Education for the current school year artists-in-schools program nor for the coming 1975–76 school year, we must be hopeful that this may change. Particularly as the total requests for the 1975–76 year program are approximately one million dollars over the amount budgeted for artists-in-schools.

There are signs to indicate that the United States Office of Education and the National Institute of Education still have some interest in furthering the development of the arts in education. Yet, the problem that exists seems to be a lack of priority for the arts in their Federal legislation which has given rise to doubts concerning congressional intent. This seems particularly true in regard to the United States Office of Education. What is needed is a clear statement of congressional intent, one which would demonstrate how the Congress feels and how their constituents feel.

KENNEDY CENTER AND ARTS EDUCATION

Are the arts an important part of the learning process of every person?

Grass roots response would seem to say yes. Congress has set aside funds for the Kennedy Center's Alliance for Arts Education (PL 93–380, section 409).

"The Commissioner shall, during the period beginning after June 30, 1974 and ending on June 30, 1978, through arrangements made with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, carry out a program of grants and contracts to encourage and assist State and local educational agencies to establish and conduct programs in which the arts are an integral part of elementary and secondary school programs. Not less than $750,000 shall be available for the purpose of this section during any fiscal year during the period for which provision is made in the preceding sentence."

It would be a major step forward if this legislation could be amended to provide authorization for shared funding of joint programs with the arts endowment, such as artists-in-schools, and for general support of the arts and the humanities in education, including workshops and seminars for artists, teachers, administrators, and scholars.

TO CHANGE THE FACE OF EDUCATION

Pilot projects have proven the arts can change the face of education and present an exciting new way of learning. The response of our States indicate that our schools and State arts agencies working together feel that the artists-in-schools program has a great potential for contributing to this valuable change, and for helping America reassess its role towards the arts, so that they may indeed become an integral part of everyone's life in this country.

It just makes sense, as we know ourselves, the arts make our lives more pleasant outside the schools, think how pleasant the schools are when art exists inside as well.

It seems to me this brief and obviously sweeping analysis of the artists-in-schools program demonstrates rather clearly the task which lies ahead of us as members of this Panel.

It is difficult to exaggerate the total thrust this program can have . . . the boundless opportunity it represents . . . and above all, what it might yet become.

I know I speak on your behalf when I say we intend to work at it.

We believe this program provides a whole new dimension for the arts. . . .

A whole new communication system or network, one which enables us to reach out to all our young people across the Nation . . . and at the same time sensitizes teachers to the great rewards which the arts bring to their teaching and the whole educational endeavor.

On many different occasions and in many different ways, John Kennedy used to say . . .

"We must begin with our young if we truly want to bring about lasting change . . . whether it is in greater appreciation of the arts . . . greater human dignity, better citizenship, or whatever, our young can change the world."

Surely, artists-in-schools is on that track.

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